

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-11 (canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A method of packaging a web comprising:
 slitting a web to form a slit web of two or more narrower webs; and
 folding the slit web into superimposed layers by:
 directing the slit web to a nip formed by first and
 second rotating reels,
 inducing the slit web to move with the first and second
 rotating reels a length of a predetermined rotational angle to provide
 simultaneous folding of the two or more narrower webs of the slit web by
 holding the two or more narrower webs alternatively against surfaces of
 the first and second rotating reels to simultaneously form adjacent stacks,
 the narrower web of each stack having a first end and a second end, and
 joining the ends of the two or more narrower webs
 together so that the two or more narrower webs form a continuous web
 whole whose length corresponds to a combined length of the two or more
 narrower webs.
13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of
joining the ends of the two or more narrower webs comprises joining a
first end of an outermost stack to a second end of an adjacent stack,
whose first end is joined to a second end of a next adjacent stack, the
joining process continuing until all of the webs are joined to form a
continuous whole whose length corresponds to the combined length of
the two or more narrower webs.
14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of
joining the ends of the two or more narrow webs comprises joining the

first ends of the two or more stacks in pairs, the pairs being formed at one end of the stacks beginning with an outermost stack, and at the other end the pairs being formed starting from the stack next to the outermost stack, the webs of the stacks forming a continuous whole whose length corresponds to the combined length of the two or more narrower webs.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of holding the two or more narrower webs alternatively against surfaces of the first and second rotating reels comprises holding the webs against the surfaces of said reels by mechanical engagement of the web by means disposed on the surfaces of said reels.
16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the means comprises at least one mechanical gripper and at least one projection extending outwardly from a periphery of the first and second rotating reels.
17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of holding the two or more narrower webs comprises holding the webs against the surfaces of the first and second rotating reels by mechanical engagement of the web by suction using underpressure.
18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the ends of the two or more narrower webs are joined by a process selected from the group consisting of sewing, taping, gluing, needling, hot sealing, ultrasound sealing, and stapling.

Claims 19-25 (canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method of packaging a web comprising:
 - (a) providing a web;
 - (b) slitting the web into two or more narrower webs;

(c) directing the webs to a nip formed by a first and second rotating reels;

(d) inducing the webs to shift with the reel the length of a predetermined rotational angle to provide simultaneous folding of the webs by holding the webs alternately against the surfaces of the first and second reels which rotate in opposite directions to pull the reel forward; and

(e) joining the ends of the webs so that the webs form a continuous ~~whole~~ web whose length corresponds to the combined length of the webs.